FAMILIAR VERSES, &c.

TO

SAMMY IRELAND.

K Shakspere (W.)

~~f. 12. d.~~

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FAMILIAR VERSES, &c.

SAMMY IRELAND.

FAMILIAR VERSES,

FROM THE

GHOST

OF

WILLY SHAKSPEARE

TO

SAMMY IRELAND.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

PRINCE ROBERT:

AN AUNCIENT BALLAD.

——————O, WOE IS ME!
TO HAVE SEEN WHAT I HAVE SEEN—SEE WHAT I SEE!

HAMLET, ACT 3. SCENE 1.

London:

RICHARD WHITE,

PICCADILLY.

1796.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]

FAMILIAR VERSES,

FROM THE

GHOST

OF

WILLY SHAKSPEARE

TO

SAMMY IRELAND.

PRINCE ROBERT:

AN ANECDOTE RELATED

BY

RICHARD WHITE.

1790.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]

FAMILIAR VERSES,

FROM THE

GHOST

OF

WILLY SHAKSPEARE

TO

SAMMY IRELAND.

AH SAMMY! SAMMY! why call forth a ghoſt?
Rather of Critics ſummon up an hoſt!
They—luckleſs wights! indite for daily bread;
But you diſturb the aſhes of the dead!
Peaceful I lay in STRATFORD's hallowed fane,
And, but for thee, might yet enſhrin'd remain;
" Bleſt were the man" I ſaid, " who ſpar'd the ſtones;
" But curs'd be he, who dared to move my bones!"*
'Tis true, my bones lie unmoleſted there,
Yet ſtill my ſpirit 's dragg'd to open air.

* SHAKSPEARE's Epitaph in Stratford Church, Warwickſhire.

Rich in your prize, of praiſe you take your fill,
But *Spectres yet may ſpeak*,—and *ſpeak* I WILL!

Oft have I conjured, from the vaſty deep,
Myriads of ſpirits at one magic ſweep!
And ſhalt thou dare, with weak unnervate arm,
To bind WILL SHAKSPEARE with a cobweb charm?
His genius unconfin'd with fancy plays
Where AVON's ſtream through fertile meadows ſtrays;
Laughs with the loves, the flitting ſunbeam rides,
And through the boundleſs paths of Nature glides.
Not lock'd in trunks,—in *auncient dirtie* ſcrolls,
Long ſhreds of parchment, deeds, and *muſtie* rolls;
Receipts for candles, bills, and notes of hand,
Some that you may—but more not underſtand.
Samples of hair, love ſongs, and ſonnets *meete*,
Together met by *chaunce* in *Norfolk-ſtreet*;
Where, fruitful as the vine, the tiny elves
Produce *young manuſcripts* for SAMMY's ſhelves.
Dramas in embrio leave their lurking holes,
And little VORTIGERNS ſtart forth in ſhoals.
To work, ye Lawyers! ranſack all your deeds,
The bait is ſwallowed, and the Public bleeds.

Freely

Freely the Caſh comes down,—lead boldly on,
The Book complete:—Four Guineas!—*Preſto!*—gone!
More papers found!!! * a neighbour here hard by—
An antiquarian wight, of curious eye,
Deep ſkill'd in pedigrees, well known to Fame—
Has found ſome writings in an hand the ſame,
The very dots, the ſtops,—the ſelf-ſame *ſhak*,
That ſoon muſt lay each quibbler on his back:
None ſhall their ſanction to the truth refuſe;
For, if they'll not believe, they muſt be Jews.

Long fam'd for *finding*, SAMMY, art thou known,
With ſteady perſeverance,—all thy own;
E'en HOGARTH † could not 'ſcape thy prying eye.
Lo! at thy beck, new beauties we deſcry!
Tobacco prints, and legendary tales,
Engraved on porter-pots with crooked nails;
Impreſſions ſcarce, long hidden from the light,
And comic wonders burſting on the ſight.

When late to STRATFORD you incog. came down,
Peeping for relics through each lane in town,

* A curious fact.

† IRELAND's Graphic Illuſtrations of HOGARTH.

I gueſs'd that ſomething freſh was in the wind,
And thus to DAVY GARRICK ſpoke my mind:
" Since you call'd forth the wond'ring nobles round
" To ſee my JUBILEE on Fairy ground,
" To chaunt my praiſes in harmonious ſtrain,
" And ſtrut in Pageants through a ſhower of rain,
" Ne'er has mine eye in *Warwick's* county ſcann'd
" So learn'd a wight as SAMMY IRELAND!"

The chair, the kitchen, room where I was born,
All from old Time's myſterious veil were torn;
I often thought—ſo ſteady were his pains,
And from his work *, ſo certain were his gains—
He'd never give his deep reſearches up,
Until he found my ſpoon and chriſt'ning cup:
Some curious remnants of my mother's ſpinning;
My little ſhoes, and all the child-bed linen!
—So have I ſeen a *Jack-daw* in a yard,
With head aſkaunt, ſome choſen ſpot regard,
Where, deep enearthed, ſome dainty morſels lay,—
Wiſely laid there againſt a rainy day:
When hunger pinches, to the ground he hies,
Now cheerful hops, and then elated flies;

* IRELANDS' Warwickſhire Avon.

But

But not contented with his well known ſtore,
He whets his bill, and greedy pecks for more.

But turn we now again to *Norfolk-ſtreet*,
Where Authors ſage and Commentators meet;
To that fam'd ſpot where Dramatiſts repair,
And Antiquarians darken all the air:
There *Miſter* KEMBLE ſtruts with ſolemn pace,
Then takes the chair; with academic grace
Pronounces all are genuine, true, and rare;
While none to contradict the Actor dare.
That wond'rous man,—the *Brother*, in *right* line,
To wond'rous SIDDONS,—names *well known as mine!*
Who ſhall preſume his judgment to diſown,
Who makes my choiceſt dramas half his own?
He, *Mohawk* like, unfeeling cuts and lops,
That SHAKSPEARE's Plays appear like *modern Crops!*
Then from the Preſs comes forth *editions* true,
And JOHN's *additions* meet the public view:
No faults throughout the title page we ſpy,
And J. P. KEMBLE ſtrikes the wond'ring eye!!!
Next mount ſublime, upon the Critic throne,
A truſty blade, and true yclep'd *Malone*.

He ſcorns complying ſentiments to ſham,
And, 'ſpite of KEMBLE, ſtates the whole a ſham.
Though ſome declare he never ſaw a line,
And 'gainſt his judgment all their ſtrength combine;
Others attempt his doubting courſe to ſteer,
And *Miſter* STEVENS, marches in the rear.
BURKE *Sammy* aids, and SHERIDAN the ſame;
The latter, right or wrong, is not to blame;
For well he knows, "*All's griſt that comes to mill!*"
And VORTIGERN can't fail the houſe to fill.
BOYDELL looks grave, and wiſely holds his peace;
For, true or falſe, they can't his fame decreaſe:
His grand edition ſtill will ſtand the teſt,
And IRELAND's *Cayan* gives the whole a zeſt.

Now SAMMY, you of courſe, will wiſh to know
The GHOST's opinion, farther light to throw;
For SHAKSPEARE's ſanction muſt have laſting weight,
And fix for ever thy depending fate;
Give thee entire the Antiquarian rule,
Or ſpurn thee forth indignant from thy ſtool:—
Then, know, my Friend, to eaſe thy troubled mind,
Thy WILLY's GHOST, to thee was always kind;

And, far from judging the old writings found,
Said to be mine, ſo long in darkneſs bound,
I'll not pretend the myſtic veil to draw—
Pronounce them forg'd, or paſs them into law:
To ſpeak the truth, I give it on my word;
For years long paſt, my Muſe has felt the ſword,—
Such hacking, flaſhing, cutting here and there,
Some parts preſs'd down, and others puff'd to air;
That I make oath, and ſwear it on the ſpot,
I know not what is mine, nor what is not.
If true,—thy envied fame will quickly ſpread,
And Britain's honours play around thy head:
If forg'd,—be prudent, vigilant, and wiſe;
Keep thy own counſel, and each threat deſpiſe.

But hold!—Methinks I ſcent the morning air;
Abrupt we part, nor can I more declare:
Lo! in the Eaſt, the glowing tints I ſee!
SAMMY, adieu!—*Farewell!—remember me!*

PRINCE ROBERT,

AN AUNCIENT BALLAD.

LATELY DISCOVERED AT THE BOTTOM OF AN OLD CHEST.

WHEN ſummer's ſun did ſheene moſt clear,
And nature look'd moſt gay;
The wood-lark warbled in the air,
And farmers turn'd their hay.

The bees in ſwarmes forſooke the hive;
Old women tink'd their pans:
To take the troop, the ruſtics ſtrive,
With cover'd eens and hands.

The trout leap'd high, in purling ſtreams,
To catch the gilded fly;
The maids awoke from pleaſaunt dreams,
And men to work did hie.

Prince

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Prince

Prince ROBERT cheer'd the wood-lands round
With merrie men and ſteeds;
The bugle horn was heard to ſound,
And die among the meads.

Young COLIN heard the bugle horn:
His Prince he hied to meet;
And, bluſhing like the roſie morn,
He did the party greete.

When thus he ſpake, with fair deport,
And mind ſecure from care;
"You muſt be weary with your ſport,
"Accept a ſhepherd's fare!"

Prince ROBERT took him at his worde,
And to his cot did haſte;
To ſhare the pleaſures of his borde,
And ſhepherd's fare to taſte.

The cottage was an humble pile,
By COLIN's father rais'd;
The geeſe ſecure from foxes guile,
And lambs before it graz'd.

The father, by the Curate plac'd,
With children was at play;
When COLIN uſhered in his gueſt,
And merrie men ſo gay.

"Come, ſit ye down," the father cried,
(Sic compliments were here,)
"Partake our food, and let not pride
"Your noble boſoms ſhare:

"For what are ſplendid court and cit,
"But buſtle, noiſe, and care?
"Were I a prince, my home I'd quit,
"Contentment for to ſhare!"

Prince ROBERT heard, and ſmote his breaſt;
Said he,—"Thy wordes are true;
"Henceforth, all pomp I will deteſt,
"And ſpend my time with you.

"All in theſe panſied lawns I'll roam;
"With ye, kind ſhepherds! ſtray:
"I'll quit my ſplendid houſe and home,
"For ever, and for aye!"

So

So this gend Prince his home did quit,
For ever and for aye!
No more he dwelt in courts or city,
But did with shepherds stray.

FINIS.